



WESTMINSTER TRAFFIC COMMISSION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

City Council Chambers, 8200 Westminster Blvd.
Tuesday – January 31, 2012 at 6:00 pm

- CALL TO ORDER** A regular meeting of the Westminster Traffic Commission was called to order by Chairman A. Nguyen on Tuesday, January 31, 2012 at 6:03 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 8200 Westminster Boulevard, Westminster, California.
- SALUTE TO FLAG** Commissioner Carey led the members of the audience in the Salute to the Flag.
- ROLL CALL** **Commissioners Present:** Andrew Nguyen, Diana Carey, Linh Nguyen (arrived at the dais at 6:07) and Ken Robbins
Commissioners Absent: Gilbert Cruz
Staff Present: Adolfo Ozaeta, Associate Civil Engineer; Corporal Lauderback, Police Department and Veronica Johnson, Secretary.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES** The minutes of the Traffic Commission's regular meeting of October 25, 2011 were approved on a motion by Chairman A. Nguyen, seconded by Commissioner Carey (3-0), with Commissioner Cruz being absent and Commissioner L. Nguyen abstaining.
- ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED** The first item to be considered at this evening's meeting was the Election of a New Chairperson and Vice Chairperson
- ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON** The election of a New Chairperson and Vice Chairperson was deferred to the next meeting due to a lack of a full Commission on a motion by Vice Chairman Robbins, seconded by Commissioner Carey (3-0) with Commissioners Cruz and L. Nguyen being absent.
- T.C. 74-197 University Street** The second item to be considered was T.C. 74-197-Request for Parking Restrictions on the Eastside of University Street, South of Vallecito Drive.

Mr. Ozaeta informed the Commission that Lieutenant Schoonmaker, Westminster Police Department, had made a verbal request for the three items to be considered at

tonight's meeting after speaking with Westminster School District Officials.

Mr. Ozaeta explained that Westminster School District Officials do not believe their school buses have sufficient room to safely perform a turn maneuver when exiting the driveway of Eastwood Elementary School.

Mr. Ozaeta directed attention to Exhibit A, an aerial photograph, to illustrate Eastwood Elementary School and the driveway. Staff's field observations found that it is very difficult for the school buses to make a right turn maneuver after their drop off and at the stop approach on University Street due to the cars parked on the side of the road. The buses impede the traffic of vehicles travelling in the opposite direction.

Mr. Ozaeta stressed that the City Council is very protective of the City's on-street parking; however, more homes now own additional vehicles and they have become dependent on the on-street parking, compared to past trends. Staff pays particular attention to strict safety concerns, as opposed to comfort zones, before recommending the removal of on-street parking.

The parking supply in front of the school will be reduced; however, parking spaces in front of homes will not be eliminated.

STAFF'S

RECOMMENDATION Staff's recommendation was for the installation of parking restrictions on the east side of University Street, south of Vallecito Drive, for a distance of 44 feet.

Chairman A. Nguyen opened the public hearing.

Clark Hampton, Westminster School District Assistant Superintendant, gave thanks to the Commission for considering the items and the Police Department for their great collaborative work throughout the City.

Jim Gleu, 5331 Berkeley Avenue, did not speak in favor or opposition of parking restrictions, his stance was neutral and questioned if the item was a safety factor or convenience factor for the school and the driver. Secondly, he stated that the teachers are the owners of the parked cars and suggested 20 minute parking zones along University to Vallecito during school hours.

Simon Watson, 5401 Vallecito Drive, spoke in opposition of parking restrictions. His concern is the safety of the students. He questioned if an overall study was done of the intersection and believes the issue is at the crosswalk. He finds cars parked in the crosswalk and blocking his driveway as parents are trying to pick up their kids. He encourages more police enforcement in the morning and a comprehensive survey of the entire area.

Mr. Ozaeta replied that staff made an effort to meet with the principals at each school in the district to survey and address any issues that may arise prior to the commencement of the school year.

Corporal Lauderback added that officers patrol the school areas during the beginning of the school year to address problematic issues. They have provided strict enforcement and issued speeding violations in this area; however, the problems tend to return and they rely on the citizens to call in when the problems reoccur. He has not received any calls or complaints in this area; but since this has resurfaced, he will begin 20 minutes of viable enforcement at the location. He further explained the pros and cons to ticketing cars and towing vehicles at a red curb.

Mr. Ozaeta recommended notifying the police department when someone is obstructing access to a public driveway. He will also address the teachers parking in the street with Clark Hampton.

Commissioner Carey, being a retired principal, stated she was surprised to hear that teachers would choose to park in the street rather than in the school parking lot.

Mr. Hampton responded that some of the staff parking is from the daycare and the teachers normally park further down street; however, he will send an email to the teachers. He is not opposed to the red curb but does find that people adhere to them.

Mr. Ozaeta offered that the Commission can request for staff to revisit the intersection approaches for the installation of additional red curb adjacent to the crosswalks.

Mr. Hampton explained that they have 17 sites and continually work with the community. They ask staff to park in the parking lots and remind parents to not block driveways and disrupt neighbors around the school sites.

The recommended adjustments are to assist with the safety of the school buses.

Vice Chairman Robbins questioned when the school buses exit the driveway onto University if they travel north or south. Mr. Hampton stated they normally make a right turn, travelling north. It is more difficult exiting the driveway versus turning at the intersection.

Mr. Gleu suggested conducting a survey up to and including Berkley Avenue or a street further, and to take an old junk car out there for a day to act as a police decoy.

MOTION

Commissioner Carey moved to approve staff's recommendation and have the Police Department and Staff look into the intersection of Vallecito and University for safety issues, seconded by Vice Chairman Robbins.

Mr. Ozaeta stated he would get together with the school district to identify the bus route to see what route it takes on its approach and departure from the school. Staff will take a more comprehensive approach in looking into the limitations of the current infrastructure on that route.

VOTE

The motion was carried by a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Cruz being absent.

T.C. 77-143 Hood Drive

The third item to be considered was T.C. 77-143-Request for Parking Restrictions on the North Side of Hood Drive, West of Goldenwest Street;

Mr. Ozaeta directed attention to Exhibit A for illustration of the subject location. Staff identified other site characteristics and will assemble proper signage and markings at the crosswalk. The existing red curb allows for students to step off the curb and it is currently not ADA compliant; however, staff will ensure the ramp is installed at the curb. The street's speed limit is 35mph and the vehicles are traveling 40mph or more. The vehicles traveling south, making an unprotected right turn, have to maintain a decent speed to keep the car following them from colliding into them. Additional concerns in the area are the children crossing the street and vehicles encountering children loading and unloading in and out of cars.

STAFF'S

RECOMMENDATION Staff's recommendation was for the installation of parking restrictions on the north side of Hood Drive, west of Goldenwest Street, for a distance of 92 feet.

Chairman A. Nguyen opened the public hearing.

Terry Swirls, 6921 Hood Drive, spoke in favor of parking restrictions and thought the recommendation would be very beneficial because the vehicles traveling along Goldenwest onto Hood are approaching children who are being dropped off and running across the street. The elimination of parking will not be taking away from the residents because the only people who park there are people going to school. Between her house and her neighbor, there is a short curb where people park which blocks their driveway.

MOTION

Commissioner Carey moved to approve staff's recommendation to install 92 feet of parking restrictions on Hood Drive in front of Fryberger Elementary School, seconded by Vice Chairman Robbins.

VOTE

The motion was carried by a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Cruz being absent.

**T.C. 75-100
Trask Avenue**

The fourth item to be considered was T.C. 75-100-Request for Parking Restrictions on the South Side of Trask Avenue, West of Chestnut Street.

Mr. Ozaeta directed attention to Exhibit A, and provided details of the street at the subject location.

The vehicles exiting the driveway are allowed to make left or right turn maneuvers. Enhancements were made two years ago to enhance the visibility of the stop approach because people were driving through the intersection having not seen the stop sign. There is a median island with a stop and staff installed an oversized sign for added visibility. This location has a sight visibility problem due to the amount of traffic. Vehicles coming out of the school driveway need to make their approach be able to view, assess the area, and continue with their maneuver. There is existing red curb from the intersection, a distance of 20-25 feet, which was to improve the operation of a right turn and not eliminate too much parking. Staff would like to improve the visibility as requested by the school district.

STAFF'S

RECOMMENDATION Staff's recommendation is for the installation of parking restrictions on the south side of Trask Avenue, for a distance of 25 feet to the east and 40 feet to the west of the Schmitt Elementary School driveway.

Chairman A. Nguyen opened the public hearing.

Jerry Gardison, Principal of Schmitt Elementary School, spoke in favor of parking restrictions and gave thanks to the officers and the team for coming out and assessing the area. Additional thanks to the community for coming out tonight and expressing their concerns. They have made it a right hand turn only out of the exit because it is very dangerous due to the high speed off of Trask. He tends to have to go out and direct traffic, especially on a rainy day, because cars lack the ability to stop. Another one of his concerns is the cars parked along the driveway, due to the angle, it forms a wall and the drivers exiting the driveway cannot see. Every day, and especially Wednesday's when all of the parents are picking up at the same time, it is student safety hazard. The red curb may be the only difference in keeping them from calling 911 and would like to thank everyone for making these changes.

MOTION

Commissioner Carey moved to approve staff's recommendation to install parking restrictions on the south side of Trask Avenue for the distance of 25 feet to the east and 40 feet to the west, seconded by Vice Chairman Robbins.

VOTE

The motion was carried by a 4-0 vote, with Commissioner Cruz being absent.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no "New Business" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Carey commented that she had communicated with several community members regarding the parking of large vehicles, trucks and RV's on the street. The community's concern is the casino buses that park on Hazard Avenue at Archway Road and picking up people a couple of times throughout the day. She visited the Pechanga website and found that they offer this location as a pick-up site.

Mr. Ozaeta elaborated on the continuous problems the City has had with the Casino tour buses. At one time, they had

an agreement to pick-up on private properties and essentially as those dissolved, rather than finding another private location, they have used the public streets. The police department is in the process of completing a comprehensive analysis of the City's parking ordinance because the City has a more relaxed parking structure.

Corporal Lauderback provided updates on the analysis and stated that the stricter restrictions should soon be ready for final draft and presented at the next Traffic Commission meeting.

Commissioner L. Nguyen raised a concern with the traffic on Bolsa Avenue and Dillow Street. In the past 6 months, he has seen two accidents there with fatalities. The problem is when vehicles travel east on Bolsa Avenue and make a left onto Dillow Street and/or the vehicles travelling on Dillow Street that make a left onto Bolsa Avenue. He questioned if there was a way to minimize the problem.

Mr. Ozaeta questioned if there was "Keep Clear" markings in the area and Commissioner L. Nguyen explained there is.

Corporal Lauderback added that they patrol the area with heavy enforcement; however, this is a problem area because there are three lanes travelling in both directions with "Keep Clear" markings and most of the time, vehicles will perform a turn thinking the third lane is clear and it usually is not. This is when the collisions occur. He does not concur that there have been any fatalities in the past 3-5 years.

Commissioner L. Nguyen requested for citations to be issued to vehicles maneuvering a U-turn at that intersection and Corporal Lauderback responded that it is a legal maneuver at that location.

Mr. Ozaeta elaborated on "Keep Clear" markings. Fountain Valley has eliminated all of their "Keep Clears" because it allows a false sense of security to the driver. Arterials with three lanes, particularly on Bolsa Avenue do not flow uniformly on all 3 lanes, 2 lanes may be travelling heavily and the gutter lane may be free flowing. This is something to keep in mind as they come up in Traffic Commission Meetings.

INFORMATION & REPORTS

There were no "Information & Reports" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

ORAL

COMMUNICATIONS

Jim Gleu applauded the police department and staff for taking a proactive approach to address some of the archaic ordinances that the City has. He spoke in favor of the 72 hour rule for the oversized parked vehicles because of the noise and believes it destroys the neighborhoods. He also offered his help with any ordinances that need to be written.

WRITTEN

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no "Written Communications" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

ITEMS

COMMISSIONERS

MAY WISH TO

DISCUSS

Commissioner Carey congratulated Adolfo, Engineering and the Police Department for handling the TET Parade.

ITEMS STAFF MAY


WISH TO DISCUSS

There were no "Items Staff May Wish to Discuss" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.


ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Andrew Nguyen
Chairman



Veronica Johnson
Secretary